

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-24 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 7 and 13 are amended, as are the specification and drawings. Support for these amendments can be found in, for example, paragraph [0069] of the specification. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application based upon the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed below; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration as the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution and during the personal interview; and (c) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection and as a result of discussions undertaken during the March 29 personal interview. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Applicant appreciates the courtesies shown to Applicant's representatives by Examiner Daniels during the March 29, 2007 personal interview. Applicant's separate record of a summary of the substance of the personal interview is contained in the following remarks.

The Office Action, in paragraph 6, rejects claims 1-4, 6-10, 12-16 and 18-4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,686,219 to Higuchi in view of International Publication No. WO 99/43886 to Meinander. The Office Action, in paragraph 7, rejects claims 5, 11 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Higuchi in view of Meinander and U.S. Patent No. 5,397,671 to Bayley. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1, and in like manner independent claims 7 and 13, recites, among other features, a lead-in gap between a wall of the housing and the conveyor at a feed port end of the conveyor and wherein the lead-in gap inhibits adhesion by smoothing and squeezing resin to the side of the conveyor.

The Office Action, in paragraph 6, concedes that Higuchi does not teach a lead-in gap at a feed-port end of the conveyor. To cure this deficiency, the Office Action, in paragraph 6, relies on Meinander as teaching this feature. The Office Action, in paragraph 6, concludes that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Higuchi with Meinander to attempt to render obvious the combination of all of the features recited in claims 1, 7 and 13. This assertion is incorrect for at least the following reasons.

Neither Higuchi nor Meinander teach the above-recited feature in claims 1, 7 and 13. The Office Action does not assert that Higuchi teaches, or would have suggested, this feature. Meinander merely teaches a wedge-like inlet in a mass-mixing trough (page 15, lines 7-16). Meinander, however, does not teach, nor would it have suggested a lead-in gap between a wall of the housing and the conveyor at a feed port end of the conveyor that inhibits adhesion by smoothing and squeezing resin to the side of the conveyor. As such, it is unreasonable to assert that Higuchi and Meinander, individually or in combination, teach, or would have suggested, the combinations of all of the features recited in claims 1, 7 and 13.

Moreover, Higuchi and Meinander are not combinable references. During the March 29 personal interview, Applicant's representatives argued that Higuchi and Meinander are not combinable in the manner suggested by the Office Action. Higuchi teaches clearances between screws and a housing for accommodating different types of toner, for example conventional and polyester based resin toner (col. 7, lines 5-10). Further, Higuchi teaches that the clearances contemplate a feature for adjusting to toner particle size to prevent scratching of the walls. On the other hand, Meinander teaches an introduction trough for

holding mass-material prior to mixing. Meinander further teaches that the trough can have a shearing tool. Thus, the wedge-like inlet trough of Meinander is limited to the purpose of holding material and shredding it for mixing. Meinander does not contemplate adjustable clearances according to the type of material. Likewise, Higuchi does not contemplate holding toner in wait for extrusion. As such, any attempt to combine Meinander and Higuchi would appear to render the respective inventions unsuitable to their intended purposes.

In response, the Examiner asserted that Higuchi suggests a lead-in gap at a feed-port end of the conveyor feature of claims 1, 7 and 13 because the contemplation of a suitable shape and clearance around the screw in Higuchi suggests motivation for combining the applied references. In fact, however, Higuchi specifically teaches away from the feature recited in claims 1, 7 and 13. Higuchi teaches that by providing surface 284 with clearances between the surface 284 and the screw 220, the prematurely melted base resin will be conveyed away by the screws (col. 8, lines 54-60). In contrast, Meinander teaches a wedge-like inlet for introducing material into the screws. Thus, it is unreasonable to assert that there would have been motivation to modify Higuchi with the teachings of Meinander to overcome the deficiencies in either reference. As such, Higuchi and Meinander alone, or in combination, cannot render obvious the combinations of all features recited in claims 1, 7 and 13.

The Office Action only cites Bayley for allegedly teaching that when an initiator is solid, it is preferable if the base resin and initiator are pre-blended. As such, Bayley does not overcome the deficiencies of either of the other applied references in rendering obvious at least the features positively recited in the independent claims.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the applied references cannot reasonably be considered to have suggested the combinations of all of the features positively recited in independent claims 1, 7 and 13. Additionally, claims 2-6, 8-12 and 14-24 would not have

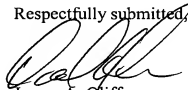
been suggested by the combinations of applied references for at least the respective dependence of these claims directly or indirectly on claims 1, 7 and 13, as well as for the separately patentable subject matter that each of these claims recites.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combinations of applied references are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-24 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:CJW/tbm

Attachment:  
Replacement Drawing Sheet (1)

Date: April 12, 2007

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**Amendments to the Drawings:**

The attached replacement drawing sheets provide formal drawings for Figs. 8 and 9.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets (1)